

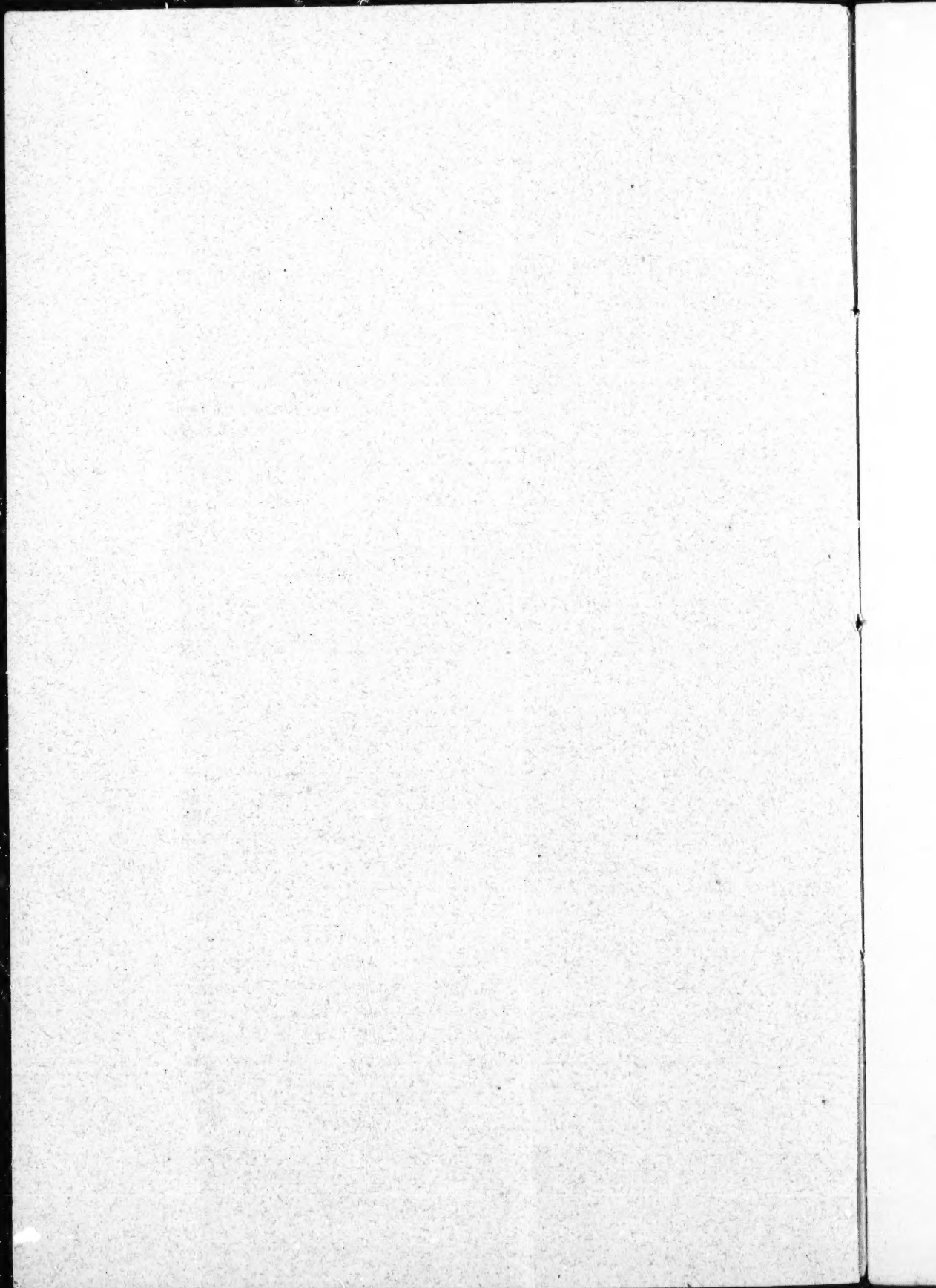
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THE GAELIC TOPOGRAPHY OF DAMNONIA.

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THE GAELIC TOPOGRAPHY OF DAMNONIA.

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I propose in this paper to examine the Topography of that portion of England which was at one time known as Dumnonia or Damnonia. For the sake of convenience it may be maintained that Damnonia embraced Devonshire, Cornwall, and the Scilly Isles. A writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* remarks that "Dumnonia or Damnonia, the Latinized name of a kingdom which long remained independent after the arrival and early conquests of the West Saxons, seems to be identical with the Cymric Dyfnaint, which survives in the present Devon. The Saxon settlers, as they advanced into the country, called themselves *Defenas*, i. e., men of Devon or *Dyfnaint*, thus adopting the British name." Into *Dyfnaint*, *Devon*, the Welsh word *dwfn*, Gaelic *domhain*, seems to enter as a component part. Professor Rhys states, that the remains of the language of the Dumnonii in Devon and Cornwall leave no kind of doubt that they were of the earlier Celts or Goidels, and not Brythons. I am of opinion that satisfactory evidence can still be extracted from the names of rivers and bays and headlands in the ancient kingdom of Damnonia, to show that Celts, whose language was Gaelic, gave in the distant past many of those topographical appellations which, with various degrees of correctness, have come down to our own time. It may be safely affirmed that the names which were given in an early age to the streams and lochs and hills and headlands of a country were intended to express some physical peculiarity. In his introduction to the "Vindication of Irish History" (p. 6), Vallancey thus writes: "It is unreasonable to suppose that the proper names of men, places, rivers, &c., were originally imposed in an arbitrary manner, without regard to properties, circumstances, or particular occurrences. We should rather think that in the earliest period, and especially when the use of letters was unknown, a name usually conveyed a brief history of the thing

signified; and thus recorded as it were by a method of artificial memory." Dr. Bannister, the author of a Glossary of Cornish names, says "that Cornwall is a peculiar country. From its geographical position it may be called the first and last in England; and *one and all* good Cornishmen will maintain that it is also the best. Time was when Devonshire was part of Cornwall, with Exeter, it is thought, for its capital; which city was till the tenth century inhabited conjointly by Cornish and Saxons. The Cornish were driven across the Tamar by Athelstane; and it was declared death for one to be found east of its banks." It was about 930 that Athelstane thus violently compelled the Cornish to retire to the west of the Tamar. Devonshire, therefore, was much more strongly subjected to Saxon influences than Cornwall; and hence it may be expected, that the traces of Gaelic will be less distinctly and commonly marked in the Topography of the former than of the latter county.

The names of the rivers of Devonshire readily disclose their Gaelic origin, *e. g.* :

Teign, teth, hot, and *an, amhainn*, river. The *Tyne* of Haddington and Northumberland.

Dart, doirt, to rush, or pour out.

Plym, plum, to plunge.

The *Mew* and *Cad* unite to form the *Plym*.

Mew or *Meavy*: *magh*, a plain; or *meadhon*, middle.

Cad, cath, battle; or *cas*, rapid.

Tavy, Taw, tamh, quiet, *a* river. The Thames, Tay in Scotland, and Taff, Tave, Taw in Wales, come from the same root. *Tabh* in Irish and Scottish Gaelic signifies *water* or *ocean*.

Torridge, Tor, Tory: Into those names *torr*, a heap or round hill, clearly enters. *Torr* is a purely Gaelic word. It forms one of the expressive monosyllables which frequently occur in the poems of Ossian. It is present in such words as Tormore, Torness, Torryburn, Torryline, Tory Island.

Avon, amhainn, a river.

Erme, ear, east; *amhainn*, a river.

Yealm, ealamh, quick.

Ece, uisge, water.

Culme, cul, back; *magh*, a plain. *Cul* occurs often in the Topography of Scotland, *e. g.*, Cullen, Culross, Culloden.

Creedy, criadh, clay.

Otter, oitir, a ridge near the sea, *Dunottar*.

Axe, uisge, water.

East Lyn, West Lyn, linne, a pool. *Linne* is present in such words as *Dublin, Roslin, &c.*

Barle, barr, a top; *liath*, grey.

Oare, odhar, dark-grey, sallow.

Mole, moyle, maol, bare.

Oke, oiche, uisge, water.

Yeo, Welsh *aw*, flowing, Gaelic, *a* water, resembles very strongly *Awe* in Argyllshire.

Bray, Braighe: height or upper part.

The names which have now been adduced are Gaelic, and occur frequently in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland, thereby enabling us to conclude that the same people who employed such words as *Teign, Avon, Tay, Awe, &c.*, in connection with the streams and rivers of Ireland and Scotland, made use of the same words in connection with the streams and rivers of Devonshire.

Cum, valley or dingle; Cornish, *cwn*; Welsh, *coom, Coome, Coombe*; Irish, *cumar* or *Comar*, a confluence of waters, occurs repeatedly in the Topography of Devonshire, *e. g.*:

Lannacombe, lan, full.

Colcombe: caol, narrow.

Branscombe, bran, a mountain stream.

Dunscombe, dun, hillock.

Wiscombe, wis, usk, ouse, water.

Salcombe, sal, the sea or salt water.

Orcombe, oir, border.

Purely Gaelic words are thus found in combination with *cum*, a term which is found with little variety in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh and Cornish.

So unmistakable is the Gaelic complexion of *Torr*, and so commonly is it to be found in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland, that were other evidences altogether wanting, the constant occurrence of it in the names of places in and around *Dartmoor* and elsewhere in Devonshire, might furnish a strong argument in favour of the contention, that Celts who spoke Gaelic must have occupied that part of England for some time at least during the early settlement of Britain. Were it to be maintained that *Dart* in *Dartmoor* is the

Gaelic word *tart*, *thirst* or *drought*, a striking correspondence would be found between the very name and the sterile character of that region. *Moor*, the latter syllable of *Dartmoor*, bears a close resemblance to *mòr*, the Gaelic adjective for *great* or *extensive*. Thus interpreted, *Dartmoor* would signify *the extensive drought*. Nor can there be any difficulty in seeing how Dart, the principal river which issues from Dartmoor, and to which I have already assigned the derivation *doirt*, would bear the name of the region in which it rises, in spite of the incongruity that may attach to applying to any river of considerable magnitude a name that is indicative of drought or scantiness of water.

Crockern Torr is the name of a hill in the centre of Dartmoor, where the legislative business of the tin mines of Devonshire used to be transacted. *Crockern Torr*, *cnoc air an Torr*, the hill on the heap. The name is purely Gaelic, and the well-known word *cnoc* occurs in it.

In *Torquay*, *Torcross*, the word *torr* is present. Other names of places in Devonshire are of Gaelic origin, e.g.:

Carnmere, *carn*, a heap or pile of stones. *Kenton*, *ceann*, head; *dun*, a hillock. *Hamoaze*, *camus*, *chamus*, a harbour; *Culbone*, *cul*, back; *beinn*, a hill.

Beer, *bior*, water.

Ness, *an eas*, cascade.

Exbourne: *uisge*, water: *burn*, water. In such words as *Cudleigh*, *Leigh*, *Chumleigh*—, *liath*, grey or hoary appears.

The Topography of Devon, in spite of all the political changes that have passed over that county, and in spite of the different races that have inhabited it, preserves unmistakable reminiscences of Gaelic-speaking Celts, who must have been its earliest inhabitants of any permanence.

Isaac Taylor, in his "Words and Places," affirms that the word *Cornwall* or *Cornwales* signifies *the country of the Welsh*, or *strangers of the horn*. *Cornwall* may be regarded as a compound of *corn*, a Cornish word signifying *horn*, and *waller* a *stranger*. The origin of the term *corn* or *horn* may be discovered in the peculiar form of *Cornwall*, running as it does like a horn into the sea. *Cernow* is the Cornish word for *Cornwall*, and *Cernevec* and *Kernnac* for *Cornish*, e.g., *Metten da dha why: elo why clapier Kernnac*: good morning to you, can you speak Cornish? Max Müller, who has evidently

bestowed great attention on the language and antiquities of Cornwall, thus writes in his "Chips from a German Workshop" (Vol. 3, pp. 242, 247): "The Cornish language is no doubt extinct, if by extinct we mean that it is no longer spoken by the people. But in the names of towns, castles, rivers, mountains, fields, manors and families, Cornish lives on and probably will live on for many years to come. More than four hundred years of Roman occupation, more than six hundred years of Saxon and Danish sway, a Norman conquest, a Saxon reformation, and civil wars, have all passed over the land, but like a tree that may bend before a storm but is not to be rooted up; the language of the Celts of Cornwall has lived on in an unbroken continuity for at least two thousand years." Norris, the editor of the ancient *Cornish Drama*, is of opinion that the Cymric was separated from the Gaelic before the division into Cornish and Welsh was effected, and that Cornish is the representative of a language once current all over South Britain at least. The author of the article on "Celtic Literature" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* writes that "among the British dialects, the most archaic, i. e., the one which best represents the British branch, is Cornish, which is the descendant of the speech of the unromanized Britons of England."

So very numerous are the Celtic words in the Topography of Cornwall, that, in his Glossary of Cornish names, Dr. Bannister asserts that there are 20,000 Celtic and other names. Owing to the difficulty as well as the uncertainty which must of necessity obtain in arriving at the true derivation of so many words, Bannister has with commendable modesty adopted as his motto the expressive language of Horace:—

"Si quid rectius istis
Candidus imperti: si non his utere mecum."

The names of the streams and rivers of Cornwall are to a large extent Gaelic, e. g. :—

Tamar, *tabh*, water; *mor*, large.

Camel, *cam*, crooked; *heyl*, *tuil*, flood.

Alan, *geal*, white; *an*, river, *Gealan*. There is a river of the same name, *Allan*, in three counties in Scotland.

Lynher, *linne*, pool; *hir sior*, long.

Looe, *ioch*, or *luath*, swift.

Fal, foil, gentle ; *fal*, a circle.

Bude, buidhe (f), yellow.

Inny, innis, an island ; or *inne*, a bowel.

Cober, cobhar, froth.

Kenscy, ceannsa, mild, gentle.

Hayle, sàl, shail, salt water.

Hone, amhainn, rivers.

It is quite evident that into the names which have been now adduced purely Gaelic roots enter—roots which appear very often in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland. The slight examination that I have made of the names of the rivers of Damnonia will tend to exemplify the correctness of the remarks which Lhuyd makes in the Welsh preface to his *Archæologia Britannica* : “There is no name anciently more common on rivers than *Uysk*, which the Romans wrote *Isca* and *Oscæ*, and yet, as I have elsewhere observed, retained in English in the several names of *Ask*, *Esk*, *Usk*, and *Ex*, *Axe*, *Ox*, &c. Now, although there be a considerable river of that name in Wales and another in Devon, yet the signification of the word is not understood either in our language or in Cornish ; neither is it less vain to look for it in the British of Wales, Cornwall, or Armoric Britain than it would be to search for *Avon*, which is a name of some of the rivers of England, in English. The signification of the word in *Guydeleg* (i. e., Gaelic) is water. * * * So do the words *uisge*, *Loch*, *Ban*, *Drum*, &c., make it manifest that the *Guydhelod* (i. e., the Gaels) formerly fixed their abode in those places.”

Carn, which is eminently a Gaelic word, occurs often in the Topography of Cornwall. *Carn* is one of the most expressive monosyllables that are to be found in the poems of Ossian. As *Cairn* it is commonly used in the English language. *Co nach cuireadh clach 'n a charn*, is a Gaelic proverb of very ancient date.

In Cornwall such words exist as :

Carn brea, briadha, beautiful.

Carn beak, beug, small.

Carn-clog, clach, cloiche, a stone.

Carn Pendower, pen ceann head, *dobhar*, water.

Carn voel, mhaol, maol, bare.

Carn leskez, leus, loisgidh, burning.

Carnglos, glas, grey.

Carn meal, mil, meala, honey.

Carn Tork, torc, a boar.

Carn Enys, Innis, an island.

Cnoc is found in such words as :

Crocadon, cnoc, dun, a hillock.

Crockard, cnoc ard, high.

Carraig, which, along with *carn* and *cnoc* and *dun*, may fairly claim to be regarded as a representative Gaelic word, and which constantly occurs in the Topography of Scotland and Ireland, is present in such names as these :

Carrick gloose, carraig glas, grey.

Carradon, dun, a hillock.

Caregroyne, ron, a seal.

Cardew, dubh, black.

Careg Tol, toll, a hole.

Cardrew, doire, a thicket ; Druidh, a Druid.

Dun, a hillock or fortress ; Cornish, *Din*, occur in such words as :

Dunbar, barr, a top.

Dunsley, sliabh, a mountain.

Dunster, tir, land.

Dunmear, mear, joyful ; mor, large.

Tintagel, Tin, dun, castle ; diogel (Cornish), secure. The first syllable is very similar to *dun* or *din*.

Tiadhan is a Gaelic word that signifies a *little hill* ; *dioghailt* in Gaelic signifies revenge. Gaelic roots are thus discernible in *Tintagel*, which is supposed to have been the birth-place and principal residence of the famous Arthur. Borlase says regarding it "that it was a product of the rudest times before the Cornish Britons had learned from the Romans anything of the art of war." So doleful are the changes which time has effected in the palace of Arthur, that it is no longer like the residence of

" that Arthur who
Shot through the lists at Camlet, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of Kings.
The old order changeth, yielding place to new."

It appears that there is an old couplet in Carew's Survey

" By Tre, Pol and Pen,
You shall know the Cornish men."

The well-known Cornish rhyme is merely an expansion of that couplet :

“ And shall Trelawney die ?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish boys
Will know the reason why ?
And shall they scorn *Tre, Pol* and *Pen*,
And shall Trelawney die ?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why.”

Camden has the couplet :

“ By *Tre, Ros, Pol, Lan, Caer, and Pen*,
You may know the most Cornishmen.”

According to him those words mean respectively a *town*, a *heath*, a *pool*, a *church*, a *castle*, or *city*, and a *foreland* or *promontory*.

Tre, trev, a home or dwelling place; Irish *treabh*, Gaelic *treubh*, a tribe or family. The word in question does not enter to any extent at least into the Topography of Scotland and Ireland; though it enters very largely into the Topography of Cornwall, *e. g.* :

Trebean, beagan, a small number.

Trodhu, dubh, black.

Tredryne, droigheann, thorn.

Treglome, iom, bare.

Trekavur, gobhar, a goat.

Tre'ase, glas, grey.

Tremeal, mil, meala, honey.

Ros (Cornish, a *heath*, *mountain*, Gaelic, a *promontory*), occurs in Scotland in such names as *Rosdu, Roseneath, Roslin, Ross Kinross*; and in Ireland in such names as *Ross, Rosscor, Rossmore*. It enters into such Cornish words as

Roscarnon, carn, a heap or mound.

Roskar, ciar, dusky.

Roskearn, fearna, fhearna, an alder tree.

Roster, tir, land.

Rosevean, bhan, ban, white; *beagan*, a little.

Pol, a pool, mud, occurs in *Poolvash* in the Isle of Man; and such Irish names as *Poolboy, Ballinfoyle, Poltrany*; and in such Scottish names as *Polmont, Polldhu, Poltarff*.

The presence of *Pol* can readily be observed in such Cornish words as these :

Polbrock, broc, a badger.

Polcairn, carr, a heap.
Poldew, dubh, black.
Poldower, dobhair, water.
Poldrissick, dreasach, thorny.
Poithern, iarunn, iron.
Polkillick, coilleach, a rooster.
Pollick, leac, a flat-stone.
Pollyne, linne, a pool.
Polmellin, muileann, a mill.

Lan. In his Cornish Dictionary, Williams remarks regarding *Lan* "that its primary meaning was a piece of ground enclosed for any purpose—an area to deposit anything in—a house, a yard, a churchyard." In dealing with the Topography of Wales in a previous paper, I endeavoured to prove on the authority of Dr. Joyce, that *lan* or *lann* is a Gaelic word, and that it does not belong exclusively to the Cymry. *Lan* is often met in the topographical names of Cornwall, e. g. :

Lanurth, ard, high.
Lanaton, dun, a hillock.
Lancarf, garbh, rough.
Landare, darach, oak ; or *doire*, a thicket.
Landenner, dun, a hillock ; *hir sior*, long.
Landew, dubh, black.

Caer, Gaelic *Cathair*, a city or fortified place, which is of frequent occurrence in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland, and to which a very remote origin must be assigned, appears in such Cornish names as :—

Caer Laddon, leathan, broad.
Carbean, ban, white ; or *beagan*, a little.
Carcarick, carraig, a rock.
Cardew, dubh, black.
Carhallack, shalach, salach, filthy.
Carhart, ard, high.

Pen, ceann, a head, than which no root is more largely present in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland, enters into very many Cornish names, e. g. :—

Pelynt, linne, a pool.
Penaverra, bharr, barr, top ; or *muir, mara*, the sea.
Pencair, caer, cathair, a city.

Pencarra, carraig, a rock.

Pendennis, dinas (C.), *dun*.

Pendew, dubh, black.

Pendour, dobhar, water.

Pendratheren, traigh, a shore.

Pendrean, droighionn, thorn.

Pendalow, da, two, *loch*.

Penellick, seileach, willow.

Peninnis, innis, an island.

Pennard, ard, high.

Penrose, ròs, a headland.

Penryn, rhyn, roinn, a point.

Pentire, tir, land; the *Kintyre* of Argyllshire.

Pentell, toll, a hole.

It is evident that those distinctive roots or words by which, according to Camden, Cornishmen are to be recognized, are, with the exception of *Tre*, of frequent occurrence in the Topography of Ireland and Scotland, and cannot on that account be restricted to the Cymry, but must be regarded as Gaelic in themselves, and therefore as entering into the Topography of these countries and islands where the Gaels had permanent homes. The citations which have been made from the Topography of Cornwall, in connection with the words or roots in question, show that purely Gaelic nouns and adjectives combine with those roots to form Cornish names.

The Gaelic word *tigh*, a house, enters in the form *chy* into the Topography of Cornwall, e. g. :—

Chytane, tigh an teine, the house of fire.

Chelean, tigh an leana, the house of the meadow.

Chenton, tigh an duin, the house of the hillock.

Chycarne, tigh a' chuirn, the house of the cairn.

Chryose, tigh an rois, the house of the foreland.

Coille, the Gaelic term for *wood*, which enters into such Scottish names as *Killiecrankie*, *Killiemore*, is discernible in such Cornish words as :—

Killiard, coille ard, high.

Killignock, coille enor, a hill.

Killigrew, coille garbh, rough.

Killivor, coille, mhor, mor, large.

Lios, a garden or entrenchment, which forms the first syllable of *Lismore* in Scotland and *Lisdoo*, *Lismoyle*, *Lismullin*, in Ireland, appear in the Cornish names :

Liskeard, *lios gu h-ard*.

Lizard, the Cornish Chersonesus, *lios*, *ard*, high.

Toll, a hole, belongs to the category of expressive Gaelic monosyllables, and is found in such Cornish words as :

Tolcairn, *toll cairn*.

Toldower, *dobhar*, water.

Tolver, *mor*, large.

Tolverne, *bhuirn*, burn, water.

Porth, *port*, a harbour, is a Gaelic word of indisputable antiquity, and is present in numerous Cornish names, *e. g.* :

Porth ennis, *innis*, an island.

Porth glas, *glas*, grey.

Porth lea, *liath*, hoary.

Porth loe, *loch*, a loch.

Portugal, *port nan Gaidheal*, the harbour of the Gaels, continues to declare that the Gaels could not have been strangers in the far-off ages in the south-west of Europe.

Port na curaich, in the island of Iona, enables the traveller to determine the exact locality where St. Columba first landed from the coracle or wicker-boat covered with hides, that conveyed him from Ireland.

The citations which have been adduced from the Topography of Cornwall furnish satisfactory evidence, that the substratum of that Topography is Gaelic ; and that the conclusion may in all fairness be drawn that Celts, whose language was Gaelic, had their home in that portion of England before the Cymry had a distinctive existence in Britain, and long before the days of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

In his Lectures on *The Science of Language* (1st Series, Lecture II.), Max Müller remarks "that it is not in the power of man either to produce or prevent a continuous change in language. * * * Language cannot be changed or moulded by the taste, the fancy or the genius of man. * * * Language exists in man, and it lives in being spoken. * * * A language as long as it is spoken by anybody lives and has its substantive existence." Cornish is no longer spoken. In 1860 Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte,

in company with the Vicar of the Parish of St. Paul, Cornwall, erected a monument to the memory of Dorothy Pentreath, who died in 1778, and who is said to have been the last person that could converse in Cornish. In the preface to his Glossary of Cornish names, Dr. Bannister remarks, on the authority of Polwhele, that Williard Bodenner, who died about the year 1794 at a very advanced age, could "converse with old Dolly," and "talked with her for hours together in Cornish." Whether Dolly Pentreath was the last person who spoke Cornish or not, it is admitted that about the close of the last century, Cornish ceased to be a spoken language.

It is beside the purpose of this paper to examine the question, as to what place or places may have been included under the designation, *Cassiterides*. The author of an article on Cornwall in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* affirms "that there can be no doubt that Cornwall and Devonshire are referred to under the general name of the *Cassiterides* or the Tin Islands." In adverting to the *Scilly Isles* in his *Celtic Britain* (p. 44-47), Rhys states that "they have been sometimes erroneously identified with the *Cassiterides* of ancient authors. * * * There is not a scrap of evidence, linguistic or other, of the presence of Phœnicians in Britain at any time." Warner, in his *Tour Through Cornwall*, which was published in 1809, contends (p. 199) "that it is a fact irrefragably established that the Phœnician colonists of Gades trafficked to the south-western coast of Cornwall from high antiquity." Betham, in his *Gael and Cymabri* (p. 64), asserts "that the Phœnicians were called so, because they were a nation of sailors or mariners, as the word *Phenice* intimates—*felne*, a ploughman, and *oice*, water—a *plougher of the sea*." A wide divergence of opinion thus prevails as to the relation of the Phœnicians to the south-west of England in the far-off centuries. Betham contends that the word *Scillies* or *Sceleys* is derived from *scal*, noisy, and *uag*, rocks; and that, accordingly, the signification is *sacred sea cliffs*. He further states that "*Scylla* or *Scylleum*, the names of promontories in Greece and Italy, and the British and Irish seas; the *Scilliés* off Cape Belerium in Cornwall, and the *Sceleys* off Cape Bolus in Kerry, stand in the same track of Phœnician navigation with Cape Belerium near Corunna in Spain." *Scylla* is derived by Greek writers from *σκόλλω*, to *skin*, to *mangle*. *Scilly* in Cornish means to *cut off*. Hence it has been held that the Scilly Isles received that appellation because they "ar ceut off from

the insular Continent." Joyce, in his *Irish Names of Places* (vol. 1, p. 420), states that *Sceilig* (skellig), according to O'Reilly, means a rock. The form *Scillic* occurs in Cormac's Glossary in the sense of splinter of stone, and O'Donovan, in the *Four Masters*, translates *Sceillic* sea-rock." I am disposed to believe that the Gaelic word *sgaoil*, to spread or scatter, enters into *Scilly*, and that the Scilly Isles were so designated in consequence of their scattered appearance. It is true that Scilly is likewise regarded as equivalent to *Sulley*, and that thus construed the term means *flat rocks of the sun* (lehaul sul).

Gaelic roots appear in the Topography of the Scilly Isles, e. g. :—
Bryher, *bre braigh*, brae ; *hir shior*, long.

Tean, *tiadhan*, a little hill.

Pool, *poll*, a hole, mud.

Carn Morval, *CARN*, a heap ; *mor*, large ; *baile*, town.

Peninnis Head, *ceann*, head ; *innis*, island.

Carraigstarne, *carraig*, a rock ; *stairn*, noise.

Carnlea, *carn*, heap ; *liath*, hoary.

Tolmen Point, *toll*, a hole.

Porth Minick, *port*, a harbour ; *manach*, monk.

Port Hellick (the bay in which the body of Sir Cloudesley Shovel was washed ashore) is derived from *port*, a harbour, and *sheilich*, *seileach*, a willow tree.

Drumrock, *druim*, a ridge.

Sufficient evidence has, I trust, been adduced to prove, that the Topography of Damnonia is fundamentally Gaelic ; and that before the arrival or the distinctive existence of the Cymry, Celts who spoke Gaelic inhabited the south-west of England in such numbers and for such a length of time, as to give to the streams and hills and headlands those names which have come down to our own day, and which still reveal their own Gaelic lineage.

Many attempts have been made to explain the Etymology of the word *Britain*. Betham is of the opinion that the Phœnicians gave the name *Briteen* (*brith*, painted, and *daoine*, men) to the people whom they found in Britain ; and that the word *Britain* is compounded of *brit*, painted, and *tana*, country, the meaning thus being *the country of the painted people*. It has also been maintained that *Britain* derives its name from *Prydain*, the first legendary King of Britain, after whom the island was called *Ynys Prydain*, *The Island*.

of *Prydain*. Before the Christian era *Albin*, or *Albion*, was an appellation by which the countries now known as England and Scotland were designated. *Albin*, or *Albion*, is now restricted to Scotland, and is the term which the Scottish Gaels apply to that country. *Albin* is in all likelihood compounded of *alb*, *alp*, a mountain, and of *fhonn*, *fonn*, a country, the import of the word thus being *the country of hills or mountains*. The conjecture has been advanced that the name *Britain* is composed of *braigh*, a top, and *tonn*, a wave, *braitoir*; and that that appellation was given to Britain in consequence of its lofty coast line as seen from the opposite shores of Gaul. *Breac*, variegated, and *innis*, an island, *Breacinnis*, is another derivation which has been assigned for the word in question. It is almost needless to remark, that although such interpretations may be ingenious, very much that is fanciful enters into them. An interpretation of a more plausible and accurate kind has recently been given by Prof. Rhys, who maintains that "the Greeks of Marseilles obtained the word *Britanni* from the natives of the south-west of England, who brought their tin to market, and in whose country the only Celtic speech in use was as yet Goidelic." He discovers in the word *Britain*, *Bretnais*, *brat*, *brattan*, the Gaelic term for a covering or a *cloak*,—an argument in support of the theory, that the Celts assumed the name which the Romans afterward wrote *Britanni*, to distinguish themselves as a *clothed* or *cloth-clad* people (*breid*, a piece of cloth) from the naked races who preceded them in the occupation of the British Isles. Though, amid so many explanations of the origin and Etymology of the word *Britain*, it appears to be impossible to arrive at a solution that can be regarded as in all respects satisfactory, it may at least be conceded that the term in question is rather Cymric than Gaelic. *Breathnach* is the name which is applied in Irish Gaelic to a Welshman. *Dumbarton*, which was once the capital of a Kingdom of Britons in the valley of the Clyde, is compounded of *Dun*, a fort or hillock, and *Breatunn*, i.e., *the fort of Britain*, and, as we may fairly argue, *of the Britons*—if those to whose capital the Scottish Gaels gave the name *Dun-Breatuinn*—, the name by which Dumbarton is known to the Scottish Gaels of our own day. Such words as *Frangach*, a Frenchman; *Sasunnach*, an Englishman, a Saxon; and *Breatunnach*, a Briton, are merely adaptations to the Gaelic language of *France*, *Saxon*, *Briton*. The Scottish Gael is wont to characterize the inhabitants of Scotland as

Albannaich. *Is Albannach mise*, I am a Scotchman. The word in Scottish Gaelic for a *British subject* or for *the British* is *Breatunnach*, *na Breatunnaich*. The name *Galbraith* is in Gaelic *Mac a' Bhreatunnaich*, *the son of the Briton*, and, as we may infer, the son of one who belonged to a different people from the Gaels among whom he may have resided, and whose name is perpetuated in the common surname *Galbraith*.

Whether the exact Etymology of *Britain* can ever be ascertained or not, or whether it may have more than one derivation, the usages of the Gaelic language go to show that it is *Cymric* and not Gaelic; and that, although it passes as current coin in the words *Breatunn* and *Breatunnach*, such words found their way into Gaelic from another source; and even when they are commonly employed, they carry with them reminiscences of an origin that is not purely Gaelic, but is to be construed as indicating that the Gaels of a far-off time adopted such words to describe the members of a race with whom they came frequently in contact, and who, as at Dumbarton, had their home for a time in the immediate neighbourhood, if not in the midst, of the Scottish Gaels.

